

Agriculture and Ecosystems Blog Guidelines

Can our environment sustain food production for a growing population? The [Agriculture and Ecosystems blog](#), established by the [CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems](#) (WLE), aims to spark debate, through informed opinions and constructive thinking, on important global issues related to one of our planet's biggest challenges – feeding 9 billion people by 2050.

The blog has become a critical space for discussion among the research and development community. It is also a useful tool for connecting our readership base with relevant publications and information sources. In 2013, we had over 50,000 visitors and over 100,000 page views. Blog posts have generated over 1,000 comments (on the site and in LinkedIn groups).

We are looking for pieces such as:

- **Reviews** of recently published journal articles or books, linked to topical issues and news (examples: [here](#) and [here](#))
- **Opinion pieces** related to current events and global affairs (example: [here](#))
- **Critical analysis**/reflections of events, workshops or fieldwork that can raise discussion and debate (examples: [here](#) and [here](#))

Please note we publish only original content.

Length: 500 – 800 words. We also accept videos, podcasts and infographics

Audience: One of the best ways to engage our readers is to ask yourself: **would you be interested in reading your blog post?** Our blog targets an informed global audience with an interest in agriculture, poverty, and international development – consider them your peers, but note many may not be scientists.

Your post should be forward thinking and solution oriented with an aim to stimulate conversations among scientists, development professionals and academics.

Style & Tone: The tone of the blog is discursive. Our readers are looking for easy-to-read and digest posts. Think of this as a space to have a conversation out loud. Write reflecting your own voice and opinions but please refrain from using technical language and acronyms excessively – remember that many of our readers may not speak English as a first language or work in your scientific field.

Content: We want you to grab the attention of our readers. Please make sure to firmly state your argument or clearly establish a point of view that our readers can grasp.

Here are a few tips on blogging that we encourage you to consider:

- **Pull your reader in.** The first few sentences of your post are meant to entice them to continue reading your post and look for more information. Consider starting with a relevant current event, personal anecdote, bold statement, or question
- **State your argument or opinion.** Then prove it (with a story contextualizing your research, personal story, include supporting evidence), and end your piece by stating your main argument again
- **Include hyperlinks** to relevant publications, articles, books, etc. so that we can direct our readers to more information.

We are looking for relevant content that addresses, in some way, the three main emerging issues of the WLE program ([read more from Director Andrew Noble here](#)):

- Resource use efficiency,
- Restoring degraded landscapes,
- Reducing farmer risk/uncertainty through sustainable land management

Editing: We want to ensure that blogs are interesting, capture the author's voice and stretch our readers to think. So we do allow quite a bit of room for independence. We will edit for ease of reading, grammar and scientific credibility. Sometimes a fellow scientist will review assertions for accuracy. However, we retain final editorial discretion.

NB: The blog is not a space to promote your organization or project and we reserve the right to reject posts with a purely promotional angle.

Photo: Pictures speak louder than words. Yes it's cliché, but we're looking for good quality photos to feature with your blog post. Please send us 2-3 landscape (horizontally-oriented) photos with minimum 600x400 pixels, correctly sourced and with captions.

Author Bio: Please send us 2-3 sentences about your background to be featured at the end of your post in our "About the Author" section. You may include links to your professional/personal websites and social media accounts.

Republishing: We're happy to share blog posts as excerpts (max 2 paragraphs) with other websites. Please include a sentence at the beginning of the excerpt that states the post was originally published on our blog with a link back to the original. Let us know!

Promotion: Congratulations, you've written and submitted your blog post. But wait! You're not quite done yet...Promoting a blog post is just as important as writing it. We will promote all blog posts on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and other social media outlets. But we request that you use your own personal outlets to promote your piece as well. Our networks are broad, while yours can reach a much more targeted and related audience.